13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood combined with the physical peculiarities of the country would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nâyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.*

In connection with the former position of the Nâyars as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan† that "in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII—

'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.